



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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County, Community Partners Launch Pilot Program to Deliver Hot Meals to Vulnerable Families

Clark County Commission Chairman Marilyn Kirkpatrick and community partners have launched a pilot called *Delivering with Dignity* to bring high-quality meals directly to the most vulnerable families in the Las Vegas Valley, keeping them and the community safe by reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

The *Delivering with Dignity* service is intended for people **struggling with poverty on a daily basis** who are most at risk according to U.S. Center for Disease Control guidelines for contracting coronavirus if they leave their homes including the elderly, those with underlying medical conditions and their family members living in the same household. Organizers say potentially tens of thousands of local residents could fall within those guidelines, and they are working with nonprofit organizations in the community to identify and provide service to the entire population in-need in the Las Vegas Valley. Financial donations to *Delivering with Dignity* are being accepted at moonridgefoundation.org. Inquires about volunteering for the program or service requests are being directed to the United Way of Southern Nevada at (702) 892-2300.

“As we deal with the public health threat posed by coronavirus, it’s imperative that we find creative ways to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents and families in our community while following the recommendations of health officials,” said Commission Chairman Kirkpatrick. “Thankfully, Las Vegas is a caring and compassionate community. We have some incredible partners who are working together to deliver meals directly to the homes of elderly and medically-fragile residents in our community who may not be able to get out to grocery stores or food distribution sites, and cannot afford to order takeout from restaurants.”

To launch the pilot program, Commissioner Kirkpatrick partnered with the **Elaine P. Wynn and Family Foundation; Healthcare Partners Nevada - Intermountain Healthcare; The Moonridge Foundation; Blau and Associates; Honey Salt Restaurant** in Rampart Commons and Buddy V’s restaurant at the Venetian; **Foster Kinship**, a Las Vegas-based nonprofit that supports relatives and close family friends raising children who are unable to live safely with their parents; and **Copia**, a for-profit technology company that intelligently redistributes highly perishable excess food from businesses and restaurants directly to nonprofits most in need of food.

“*Delivery With Dignity* was created to provide meals to seniors and other vulnerable residents who cannot leave their homes in the middle of this pandemic. We hope to expand the service with support from the community, philanthropists and government grants. Simultaneously, it is also important to us to provide employment to as many of the restaurant workers in the valley who are healthy yet without work,” explained Punam Mathur, Executive Director of the Elaine P. Wynn and Family Foundation.

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Chefs at Honey Salt prepared 800 meals to be 'delivered with dignity' to the homes of nearly 100 of the most vulnerable families identified by Foster Kinship. Many of the meals delivered on Monday with the help of seven volunteer drivers were taken to households headed by senior citizens raising their grandchildren.

"Many of the family members we contacted were in tears when we called them to offer this service to them as part of the pilot," said Dr. Alison Caliendo, Founder & Executive Director of Foster Kinship. "We are working with many elderly people who have health problems of their own, and they literally are putting their health at risk each time they get in their car to take their children to a food distribution site. These families are very vulnerable on any given day, let alone trying to cope with the challenges presented by coronavirus."

"Each family will receive two meals serving a family of four, or a total of eight people. These aren't your average PB&J or turkey-sandwich type of meals. These are meals prepared by the culinary chefs from Honey Salt's kitchen. The restaurant is generously providing these meals at a reduced rate with private donations helping to cover the cost of ingredients, production, and distribution," said Julie Murray, president of The Moonridge Foundation and Co-Founder of Three-Square.

"We are grateful to be able to serve the community in any way we can during this difficult time," said Elizabeth Blau, of Blau and Associates, which operates Honey Salt restaurant and Buddy V's. "The governor's closure order allows restaurants to operate on a take-out basis, so our chefs and staff are thrilled to keep our kitchen open and offer their talents for such a critical cause."

Copia's logistics and food matching technology allows the meals to remain fresh by providing drivers with the most efficient route to drop-off food to vulnerable families closest in proximity. *Delivering with Dignity* debuts with Copia in Las Vegas. As part of this pilot initiative, Copia reengineered their technology to provide food directly to individual families in need instead of redistributing it to shelters or food pantries that serve larger populations.

"Copia is Solving the World's Dumbest Problem. We believe in a world with so much technology, innovation, and abundance issues like hunger shouldn't exist. It is not a lack of food that's the issue, it's an ineffective distribution of food. Hunger is not a scarcity problem, it's a logistics problem and Copia is out to solve it. We've mastered the matching, routing, and delivery of highly perishable prepared food from restaurants, hospitals, and commercial kitchens to afterschool programs and veterans agencies in 150+ cities. We'll feed over 4 million people this year with incredible food that would have otherwise gone to waste," said Komal Ahmad, SF-based, Vegas-native and founder and CEO of Copia. "Now, our engineering and ops team are working around the clock to reengineer our platform to best serve Clark County and our partners with high-quality food delivered with dignity to those most vulnerable in the face of this pandemic."

Find out more about the support services **Foster Kinship** provides at www.fosterkinship.org, by phone at (702) 546-9988, or email: FamilyAdvocate@FosterKinship.org. The organization also calls on Nevadans to make financial donations and provide diapers size 4 and 6, pull ups, formula, hand sanitizer, and Lysol wipes.

Hungry to make change yourself? Have food to donate? Want to manage and track food waste in your business? Visit **GoCopia.com** or email them to get involved at hello@GoCopia.com.

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Clark County is a dynamic and innovative organization dedicated to providing top-quality service with integrity, respect and accountability. With jurisdiction over the world-famous Las Vegas Strip and covering an area the size of New Jersey, Clark is the nation's 13th-largest county and provides extensive regional services to more than 2.3 million citizens and 45.6 million visitors a year (2019). Included are the nation's 9th-busiest airport, air quality compliance, social services and the state's largest public hospital, University Medical Center. The County also provides municipal services that are traditionally provided by cities to 1 million residents in the unincorporated area. Those include fire protection, roads and other public works, parks and recreation, and planning and development.

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